

REMARKS

Claims 13-33 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 1-12 have been canceled. Applicant respectfully submits that no new matter has been entered by these amendments and respectfully requests entry of the claims.

I. Claim Objections

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner withdraw the objections to the claims in view of the self-explanatory amendments presented above.

II. Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Applicant respectfully submits that Fukushima et al. (US 6,205,562 B1) fails to teach or suggest all the limitations of new claims 13-33.

For example, claim 13 recites, *inter alia*,

 said input module comprising:

 means for squelching said external communication input signal when a defect is detected, and

 input module means for outputting said squelched external communication input signal as an internal signal when a defect is detected; and

 at least one of said plurality of internal modules comprising:

 means for monitoring whether said received internal signal is squelched

Applicant respectfully submits that Fukushima fails to teach or suggest means for “squelching” an input signal when a defect is detected and for “outputting” the squelched signal and means for monitoring whether a received signal is “squelched.” In particular, Fukushima teaches a simple switch. The two input signals are monitored for alarms and if an alarm is detected, a different input is selected. However, there is no teaching of squelching an

input signal, outputting the squelched signal as an internal signal, and another module monitoring whether a received internal signal is squelched.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 13 is not anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) by Fukushima, because the reference does not disclose all of the features and limitations of the claim. Further, Applicant submits that independent claim 24 and its dependant claims 25-33 are also patentable over Fukushima for at least the same or similar reasons. Finally, Applicant respectfully submits that no combination of the references applied in the Final Office Action would supplement for the above noted deficiencies of Fukushima. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art neither anticipates nor renders obvious the new claims. As such, Applicant respectfully requests the entry and allowance of claims.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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